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JEWISH INTERPRETATIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

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Ignatius of Antioch, writing to the Philadelphian church about 115 A.D., maintains that "it is better to hear Christianity from a man who is circumcised, than Judaism from one uncircumcised." So near the times of the apostles, most of the church's older leaders were still men who, like Timothy, had known the Holy Scriptures from childhood, because born and brought up in the Jewish faith. It was inevitable, accordingly, that competency to teach "the Scriptures" (by which was meant exclusively the Old Testament) should be almost confined to men who owed their training to the synagogue. Polycarp, who deprecated his own lack of training in the sacred writings (*Ad Phil.*, xii, 1), was probably somewhat exceptional in this, and in 115 Polycarp was one of the younger bishops. In point of fact gentile interpretation of the Jewish scriptures suffers even today from lack of the true perspective. Do his best, the outsider cannot enter into the spirit of Judaism, and understand its ideas in their continuous unfolding through the ages, as can the genuine son of Abraham after both flesh and spirit. Indeed, at any period of the church the advantages of the Christian teacher who comes to his office with all the training of the rabbi are so obvious that we have no difficulty in indorsing the doctrine that it is well to "hear Christianity from a man who is circumcised." Our first canonical evangelist, himself apparently a converted rabbi,

expresses this ideal by declaring the scribe made a disciple to the Kingdom of Heaven to be "like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."

It is less easy to imagine who the obnoxious gentile teachers could be who according to Ignatius were teaching "Judaism." In all probability they were theosophists of the type of those who in Paul's life-time were "making spoil" of the Colossians by their "philosophy and vain deceit, after the rudiments [στοιχεῖα] of the world, and not after Christ," making distinctions of meats and drinks, feast days, new moons, and Sabbath days, and subjecting themselves to ordinances as "a worship of angels." If so, Judaism too had small liking for its gentile propagandists. It preferred then as now its own interpreters; and he who would have a fair and worthy estimate of the older faith must do it this justice. He must not be wholly content to "hear Judaism from men uncircumcised."

By a similar standard of measurement converts from Judaism will take no very high rank. Our own generation may occasionally see an Edersheim converted from the orthodoxy of the synagogue to that of the Scotch Presbyterian kirk, and may continue to draw "rabbinic parallels" from many successive editions of his *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* and similar works. This may seem to put us, so far, in the same favorable position as the Apostolic age, with its many leaders of Jewish birth. Unfortunately neither the doctrine from which, nor the doctrine to which the conversion is made reflects the Apostolic age unchanged. Moreover, that which the convert's coreligionists most need to know is just that which the convert puts farthest behind him, viz., sympathetic appreciation of the strong points of his former faith. We should not value very highly interpretations of Christianity by apostates to Islam or Buddhism, and it should not surprise us if the synagogue puts no higher estimate on interpretations of Judaism by those who have forsaken it. Even the interpretations given in the Gospel of Mark and the Epistle to the Romans are not to be taken as if written from the cool and impartial viewpoint of the historian of religion. Polemics "against the Jews" from Justin and Tertullian down, including those of converts to Christianity, are the least helpful of all interpretations of the mother faith.

Greater is the service of the splendid succession of Christian Hebraists beginning with Origen and Jerome, and reviving after the Renaissance with Reuchlin. The later line begins with the publication in 1658 of John Lightfoot's *Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae*, Lightfoot's work being supplemented and enlarged by Schoettgen in 1753. From that period to Canon Taylor of Cambridge, Strack of Berlin, and Dalman of Jerusalem, the church has no lack of great names to prove it mindful of the need of interpreting its own faith through the literature of the parent religion.

Yet here too a completely objective and historical method has been slow in manifesting itself. We might choose among the works of typical Christian Hebraists, as nearest to our present theme, Wünsche's well-known *Neue Beiträge zur Erläuterung der Evangelien aus Talmud und Midrash* (1878). The book is typical. It is justly characterized by a Jewish writer as "the most complete collection of parallel passages of Talmud and New Testament since the works of Lightfoot and Schoettgen." A similar purpose is pursued by the English scholar R. T. Herford in *Jesus Christ in Talmud and Midrash* (1903). Such labors, however, do not greatly advance the cause of mutual understanding. "Collections of parallel passages" were commendable as a beginning. They may long continue to serve those whose expectation of comparative religion is that the comparison shall be more or less odious to opponents. But for a generation which has begun to think in terms of the history of religion (*Religionsgeschichte*) such cabinet specimens are mere *dissecta membra*, incapable of conveying any notion of the great and still living mother faith, until restored to their true organic relation. The "atomistic method" must be transcended.

And the work of the Christian Hebraists has already been transcended by that of Christian historians of Judaism. Ferdinand Weber's *Lehren des Talmud quellenmässig, systematisch und gemeinverständlich dargestellt*, published by Franz Delitzsch in 1880, after the author's death, with the subtitle *System der altsynagogalen Palästinischen Theologie*, hardly justifies its claim to present a "system." It leaves wide gaps between the later doctrines of the synagogue and their sources in Old Testament literature. Still, uncritical as the book was, it marked a beginning in the direction of

religio-historical treatment. But the real roots of modern religio-historical interpretations of Judaism lie elsewhere, viz., in the interest of Christian scholars in Jewish religious development from the Maccabean period to the war of Hadrian, considered as the historical background of Christianity. This is the field in which Prideaux's *Connection* (1720) long stood almost unrivaled. It has of late been richly cultivated, but principally piecemeal. Thus among special doctrines, the Jewish messianic hope has been treated by James Drummond and V. H. Stanton; the doctrine of sin and the evil impulse, by F. R. Tennant and F. C. Porter. "Eschatology Jewish and Christian" has been the special inquiry of Baldensperger and Volz in German, and of R. H. Charles in England. A still broader phase of divergence in doctrine between the two religions receives the attention of Oesterley and Box, Oesterley's *Jewish Doctrine of Mediation* (1910) continuing with more of the historical spirit and in broader scope the work of Wuensche¹ and Dalman.²

Such partial studies are subordinate to the general problem taken up in the great history of Schürer.³ It becomes more specifically a problem of the history of religion in the work of C. H. Toy⁴ in our own country, and in Germany is carried to a splendid height of comprehensive scholarship by Bousset in his *Religion des Judenthums in Zeitalter Jesu Christi*, 1903. In Bousset's work we may say that Christian scholarship has done its best to interpret Judaism from the standpoint of the historian of religion.

Meantime a broad basis is being laid for further appreciation of Judaism, both Hebrew and Hellenistic, in the time of Christ by modern translations of the post-canonical literature. Such are the great editions of Kautzsch in Germany, and of R. H. Charles in England, of *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*. Scholars, moreover,

¹ *Die Leiden des Messias in ihrer Uebereinstimmung mit der Lehre des alten Testaments und der Aussprüche der Rabbinen*, 1870.

² *Jesaia 53, das Prophetenwort vom Sühnleiden des Gottesknechts, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Jüdischen Literatur*, 1914.²

³ *History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*, 1891.

⁴ *Judaism and Christianity*, 1891. Compare the same author's "What Christianity Owes to Judaism" in *N.Y. State Conference of Religions*, ser. VI, 1, February 1908.

are soon to receive a new and critical text of the Septuagint from the University of Cambridge. New impetus is thus sure to be given to researches in this domain of the history of religion. Thanks largely to the work of the *Religionsgeschichtlicher*, we may count on ever-larger capacity on both sides to see and appreciate inherited doctrines in the long perspective of religious development.

But the spirit of catholicity born of historical study has not been confined to students owing allegiance to the Christian faith. Its greatest triumphs have been exhibited in the synagogue, where there was greatest reason for a heritage of bitterness. And the outstanding writings are those of two men whose devotion to Judaism is not merely academic, but is witnessed to by philanthropic service of world-wide effect. Judaism here sets the example to followers of Christ, an example not easy to surpass.

Since the time of the Epistle to the Hebrews comparisons of Christianity with Judaism have been common, whose object was to confirm the Christian in his conviction of the superiority of his own religion. Few indeed have been those in which the writer addressed his coreligionists with exhortations based on the merits of contemporary Judaism, and warnings against an ill-founded assumption of superiority. If the example now set is to be emulated, Christian Hebraists must cease to limit themselves to the study of Judaism before the separation. They must learn to appreciate sympathetically that branch of the elder stock which since the days of the New Testament has been in violent opposition to the church. And having learned the point of view of the synagogue, they must return to the interpretation of the Judaism of the first century prepared to apply to it the standards of the Talmudist as well as the standards of the Christian theologian.

Meantime we are called upon to note how our two typical representatives of modern Judaism have been impelled, by a combination of the scientific spirit with the spirit of practical philanthropy, to commend to their fellow-Jews the religious values of the New Testament.

The name of Montefiore recalls at once to every lover of his kind some of the most serviceable benefactions among the many educational philanthropies of men of Jewish race. Nor has the

literary activity of Claude Goldsmid Montefiore, founder and editor of the *Jewish Quarterly Review* and author of many contributions to theological thought, been at the expense of the inherited family devotion to good works. It is a coincidence not unworthy of mention that the name which must be placed side by side with his—that of Moritz Friedländer—has similar associations from his position as secretary and agent of the great educational philanthropy of Baron de Hirsch.

Montefiore and Friedländer have both attempted the favorable interpretation of Christianity to their coreligionists. Both aim to promote reciprocal sympathy and appreciation between synagogue and church, but especially to commend what they consider the vital religious values of Christianity to the emulation of the modern Jew. Both (but especially Friedländer) are trained scholars and theologians, and both are to be classed as “liberals,” though within the limits of this general agreement the difference is about the widest that could be conceived. To Montefiore the legalistic development of Judaism characteristic of Palestine and of Jews of Semitic speech in New Testament times, and having as its distinctive institutions and agencies the synagogue, the scribe, and the brotherhood of Pharisaic *chaberim*, represents the true line of growth. He has little of the mystic about him, and does not feel that Judaism is the poorer for the disappearance of the sacrificial system and the ideas it shadowed forth. Ethical theism is the proper goal of the religious instinct, and “liberal” Christianity of the Unitarian type, and “liberal” Judaism are too essentially alike in their approach to this ideal to stand religiously aloof. The Christianity which he interprets to the synagogue is of this “liberal” type, and he naturally anticipates equally sympathetic treatment of liberal Judaism.

The tone and spirit of the books in which Montefiore’s irenic task is taken up are almost beyond praise. The manner is that of a consummate courtesy, the matter shows the insight of scholarship coupled with the rarer quality of sympathetic catholicity. But Montefiore protests, and protests with all the energy his sincere modesty and unaffected courtesy will allow, against what he deems the travesty of Judaism current among Christian writers since the

days of the New Testament. Those who know the commonplaces of Christian polemic against "rabbinic" teaching will realize how large an element of justice enters into this protest. The representation of the synoptic writers, and still more of Paul, that the Torah as inculcated by the scribes and practiced by the Pharisees was felt by the ordinary Jew of the first century as a burdensome yoke, Montefiore regards as a complete inversion of the fact. To the typical Jew of the time the Law was his crown, his glory, his delight. The scribes and Pharisees, so far from taking an attitude of superiority and self-righteousness, were in the highest degree men of the people, distinguished almost as much by their poverty and humility as by their learning. The synagogue comes nearer than almost any other human institution to the ideals of absolute democracy, and when Judaism after the overthrow of Herod's temple took the course of the synagogue schools of Jamnia and Tiberias, concentrating its vitality by turning in upon itself in the study and practice of its unique religious inheritance, it followed the true and normal line of progress. The hard conditions of the time led indeed to narrow and mechanical modes of interpretation, and to an unfortunate isolation of the orthodox Jewish mind from gentile culture. But the general line of advance from the religion of the great prophets and teachers of righteousness, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, down to the humanitarian ethics of the modern synagogue, and the paternal theism of Reform-Jewish theology is in substance unbroken. The line of continuity of Hebrew thought passes thus (according to Montefiore) with but slight disturbance at the separation of Christianity by way of Hillel and Akiba to the mediaeval rabbis and the modern liberal synagogue. One only wonders whence the bitter hostility between Jesus and the scribes and Pharisees. If the situation was as Montefiore conceived it, why was not Jesus himself both scribe and Pharisee? Why is his whole career depicted as that of a champion of the outcast element of the social body against an oligarchy intrenched in synagogue and temple? Why after the crucifixion does so large a fraction of the Jewish people break away in revolt against leaders whose teachings and methods were not essentially different from those of the Nazarene, and adopt the rite of initiation by baptism into a

new Israel known by his name, and founding its hope of salvation on "the grace of the Lord Jesus"?

Montefiore's interpretation of Christianity is that of a literary critic. It is natural that he should resort to the form of a commentary on the Synoptic Gospels to set it forth, and that he should supplement the commentary with a volume of Jowett Lectures on *The Religious Teaching of Jesus* (1910). As a broad-minded scholar, a pupil of Jowett in the classics, endowed with unusual capacity for sympathetic appreciation of religious values in faiths outside his own, Montefiore could not fail to appreciate the beauty of Jesus' message and character; nor could he fail to recognize the religious vitality of Christianity. Not unnaturally he attributes this vitality to the ethical teachings of Jesus and the pathos of his martyrdom rather than to the symbol of the cross and the doctrine of the atonement. He therefore makes it his task to interpret to the synagogue this moral and religious teaching of Jesus, which to him is equivalent to "the best which the rabbis have taught" disencumbered of the mass of trivialities of the Talmud. For the clear and simple beauty of this teaching Montefiore has an admiration as sincere as his reverence for the moral grandeur of the Teacher. Jesus is to him the last and greatest of the prophets. The reduction, in the Sermon on the Mount, of the whole faith and duty of the genuine Israelite to a few principles of exquisite truth and beauty regarding man's relation to his heavenly Father wins Montefiore's regard no less than the blameless devotion of the Teacher's life.

For this noble interpretation church as well as synagogue has reason to be profoundly grateful. Its strength lies precisely where one would anticipate, from the author's character and training, that it would lie. An irenic spirit combined with liberal culture is a good equipment for him whose task is to be to prove to the synagogue that Jesus has taught more simply and beautifully the substance of what is also to be found in the records of its own faith, and to the church that its conceptions of Judaism are largely perverted by ignorance and fanaticism. The reader of these two volumes, whether Jew or Christian, cannot fail to think better than before of both religions. Montefiore does not profess to have

the Talmudic learning of his friend and colleague Abrahams. But he understands the spirit of liberal Judaism, and to the average reader he makes a better commentator on the Gospels through the application of this very general knowledge than would many a Talmudist over-burdened with his wealth of parallels.

Of the spirit which animates the commentary one can best judge by a few lines from the opening paragraphs of its introduction:

Of Jewish exposition of the Gospels there has been little. Endless Christian commentaries exist, written from many different points of view, with great learning and splendid patience, but Jewish commentaries can hardly be said to exist at all. Jewish scholars have usually taken up an attitude toward the New Testament, and more especially toward the Gospels, which does not lend itself to impartiality. It has not been a very fruitful and light-giving attitude. A main effort has been to show that to the various admittedly admirable sayings of Jesus reported in the Gospels there are excellent parallels in the Old Testament or the rabbinical writings. An atomistic treatment has usually been adopted. The teaching of Jesus has not been much discussed and appraised as a whole. And where it has been so discussed, the line has been rather to depreciate or to cheapen. Jewish writers have either looked for parallels or for defects.

Of the study given to his subject from the Christian side it is but fair to say that Montefiore has used to full advantage the best of recent critics and interpreters. Loisy has most frequently directed his thought; but he has also made thorough use of Holtzmann and both the Weiss's, Wellhausen and Klostermann, as well as leading English authorities.

Montefiore does not claim to be an original investigator in the synoptic problem, nor a resolver of knotty points in Greek exegesis. But he has transcended the "atomistic method" which he deprecates. At least he has done so—if we may so express it—in one dimension. The life and teaching of Jesus are brought into co-ordination with Judaism *conceived as in continuous development along the line of the Palestinian synagogue*. And this is well so far as it goes. The very fact of this attempt to enrich the religious inheritance of the synagogue by that which from this point of view would seem to be an overflow from its own earlier and fresher stream is proof of religious vitality. Liberal denominations of Christians have already felt the *rapprochement* with the Reformed

synagogue. Such an interpretation of the life and teaching of Jesus as Montefiore's cannot fail to promote this fellowship to the advantage of both sides. There are few more splendid chapters in the history of religion than the struggle of Judaism for ethical monotheism from the Maccabean martyrs down to our own time, nor is there a more rewarding key to the religious consciousness of Jesus than that which Akiba and many another Jewish martyr affords us in giving up life itself "for the unity." We remember that to Jesus also the first and great commandment is the *Shem'a* the undivided allegiance of the soul to the one Father in heaven. It is when Montefiore deals with the larger problem of the history of religion involved in his more recent work *Judaism and St. Paul* (1914) that his weaker side appears. His scheme of religious development has no room for the work of the great Apostle to the Gentiles. Paul's sense of moral evil and the weakness of humanity led to his setting Christianity over against Judaism as emancipation from the bondage of legalism into the freedom of a relation of grace. His sense of the transcendence of God inclined him to the tendencies of Hellenistic Wisdom in his cosmology, and to the apocalyptic eschatology, popular, as we know, among the Jewish masses in his time but frowned on by the rabbis. Above all does Paul's sense of sin and of the moral transcendence of God make him dissatisfied with the synagogue doctrine of repentance. Of course, repentance will obtain forgiveness; but what obtains "the grace of repentance"? To Paul Jesus' work is supremely that of a mediator. He was delivered up for our trespasses. He was raised for our justification, viz., that he might "make intercession for us." But Montefiore does not find a doctrine of mediation in genuine Judaism. Paul is therefore, to him something inexplicable save by importations from without. Only as a Hellenistic Jew of the Diaspora can he be accounted for. "Paul's pre-Christian religion was poorer, colder, less satisfying, and more pessimistic than rabbinic Judaism."¹ Yet Paul himself certainly considered himself a typical Pharisee, and somehow or other great multitudes of Jews of his own generation labored under the same sense of dissatisfaction with Pharisaism. To a very considerable

¹ *Judaism and St. Paul*, p. 126.

element of the poorer classes in Palestine, and to immense numbers of Jews of the Dispersion the legalistic processes of exact definition in vogue among scribes and Pharisees were robbing their ancient faith of some of its most vital elements. These masses of non-Pharisaic Jews, and still greater masses of Hellenists and proselytes felt these closer and closer definitions of the yoke of the Law as a burdensome restraint, and turned to Christianity for relief from it.

As with his interpretation of Jesus, Montefiore has not failed to apply in many ways his faculty of sympathetic appreciation; but the field is one in which he is much less at home. It requires the insight of a student of the history of religion to see what elements of the older faith were working along other channels than that relatively narrow one which issues in the talmudic teaching. One must survey the whole domain of Judaism since the Persian period and appreciate developments in the Diaspora in contact with Greek thought as entitled just as truly to represent the real religious genius of Israel as the inbreeding of the Palestinian synagogue. Such a historian of religion is Friedländer. And Friedländer is as completely the champion of Hellenistic Judaism with its broader interpretation of Mosaism, its keener missionary spirit, its more universalistic ideal, as Montefiore of the Judaism of scribe and Pharisee.

Of the many volumes in which Friedländer develops his theory of the development of religious thought in the Judaism of New Testament times, perhaps the most significant is entitled *Die religiösen Bewegungen innerhalb des Judenthums im Zeitalter Jesu* (1905). Here on the one side are discussed the developments of "Palestinian Judaism," classified under the heads: "The Apocalyptic Movement," "Religious Movements among the People of the Land ('*am ha-'aretz*)," "Essenism," and "*Minuth*" (Jewish heresy). On the other side Hellenistic Judaism is described in its development at Alexandria as the legitimate outgrowth of the religion of Moses and the prophets. After a discussion of the Greco-Jewish literature in its motives and objects follows a chapter devoted to the Therapeutae (Jewish monasticism), setting this movement in comparison with Palestinian Essenism, and a chapter on the Sibylline "Wisdom" compared with apocalypse. The concluding chapters

present, respectively, "Jesus" and "Paul" as standing for the larger line of development, the true succession of the religious genius of Judaism in Palestine and the Greek-speaking world, respectively.

For to Friedländer the legalistic development of Judaism by scribe and Pharisee was a narrowing reaction. The movements he studies in Palestine and the Diaspora, respectively, exhibit to his mind coincident general tendencies. The apocalyptic literature is a Palestinian counterpart of the Hellenistic Wisdom in its humanitarian ethics, its universalistic ideals, and its cosmology of intermediate beings. The ascetic monasticism of the Therapeutae finds its counterpart among the Essenes, but above all the Isaian ideals of Israel as the Witness to the nations, the Light to lighten the Gentiles, the missionary calling of Israel, and the messianic hope as depicted in the great Songs of the Servant, he finds taken up by the Diaspora and neglected by the scribes. It is this which makes him award to Hellenistic Judaism the title to be the true heir to Israel's religious ideals. Not that in the bitter struggle against forcible Hellenization Chasidim and Pharisees did not fight an indispensable fight, but that the intensive struggle eclipsed the ideal of extension.

Thus talmudic Judaism in measuring all the history of Israel's religious past by its own standards is guilty of a fatal narrow-mindedness. Jesus in carrying to the "people of the land" a simple gospel of the forgiveness of sins, after the warning protest of the Baptist against national self-righteousness, was a truer successor to the prophets and the Chasidim, than the "painted" Pharisees into whose hands Alexandra delivered over, as far as she could, the development of the national institutions. Paul in giving new standing to the mediation doctrines of Hellenistic Wisdom, and interpreting the messianic idea in a universalistic sense, is not only doing justice to Deutero-Isaiah but is vindicating the claim of the Greek speaking Jew to be "also a son of Abraham."

Only with the second-century apologists and church Fathers does the process of expansion cease, according to Friedländer, to have a just claim to be a legitimate development of Judaism. Up to Justin the doctrine of the unity of God is no more threatened in the leading Christian writers than in Philo. The tritheism of the

catholic creeds is a gradual development from polemic with the synagogue.

Friedländer lacks the sweet reasonableness of Montefiore's style. His onslaughts on the scribes and Pharisees as the belittlers of Judaism, hiding "the light of the Gentiles" under their petty bushel, have almost the vehemence of the Gospels. He is an ardent champion of the Galilean *'am ha-'aretz*, and makes us feel as if he sympathized quite too much with Akiba in the days when the great rabbi had himself been an *'am ha-'aretz*, and "would have rushed upon a scribe like a mule to bite him" had he had opportunity. There is a splendid grasp of the subject from the broad viewpoint of the historian of religion, and a wonderfully sympathetic and appreciative familiarity with the Hellenistic Jewish literature from Septuagint to Philo. But Friedländer cannot help writing as an advocate, and one discounts something from representations that are too partisan.

Nevertheless, of the two interpretations every student of the history of religion in the Greco-Roman civilization must feel that it is that of Friedländer which does amplest justice to the subject. It is hard that Palestinian Judaism should be reproached with losing the missionary spirit and forgetting the universalistic ideal of the messianic hope, when the loss of the great body of its gentile adherents to the growing church was a misfortune due to the necessity it was under of defending its own life. In Alexandria Judaism enjoyed the favor of the Ptolemies and could develop its propaganda in peaceful accommodation to the broadening spirit of Greek philosophy. In Palestine it was forced into the bitterest struggle against Hellenism, and only preserved its separate identity by intensest particularism. Legalism was a means of self-preservation for the Palestinian synagogue. If the Pharisee incurred the hatred of the *'am ha-'aretz* by his attitude of: "Touch me not, lest thou shouldst pollute me in the place where I stand,"¹ this is but the obverse of a splendid heroism willing to undergo a thousand martyrdoms in defense of "the unity." And yet the real reason why Christianity inherited the great Isaian succession was because with all its faults it did preserve to the world a larger measure of the great germinant ideas of Hebrew monotheism than talmudic Judaism.

¹ Assumpt. Mos. 7:10 (7-30 A.D.). Cf. Büchler, *Der galiläische 'Am ha-'aretz*.

But the historian of religion is not an apologist. His comparisons are not made in the interest of possible superiorities. Even were there such a disposition on the part of the modern Christian, it would be put to shame by the great theodicy of Paul, in Rom. chaps. 9-11. For Paul the natural branches and the branches of the wild olive both have their part in the pedagogy of God, and the modern historian of religion must confess to something of the same sympathy as Paul's. He cannot afford not to trace with sympathetic interest that line of development which leads down from the Maccabean revolt to the war of Hadrian, and the stiffening of Jewish orthodoxy after the great crisis of the first century. To judge of Judaism as a whole from this line of development would be like judging the Christianity of pre-Reformation days from the standpoint only of Loyola and the Catholic reaction of the seventeenth century. The church Fathers are indeed wrong in their specific accusations against the leaders of the synagogue of cutting out from scripture passages which favored Christian doctrine. But evidences abound of the truth of the charge if we take it to mean the systematic elimination of those elements of the religious literature and belief of the Jewish laity which were suspected of leading to *minuth* or Christianity. There was a definite and systematic screwing up of the pegs of scriptural orthodoxy. The process began long before the Christian era with the battle against the encroachments of Hellenism. It received a tremendous impetus at the overthrow of the temple and the formation of the schools of the *Tannaim* in the period of Akiba. Its aim was the preservation of the purity of Jewish ethical monotheism. Its method was legalism, concentration of thought and action upon the written Torah. We can sympathize with it at the same time that we recognize that in the effort to purge itself of all *minuth*, all tendencies to *Epikouros*, to Greek liberalism, to Christianity, the synagogue of the founders of talmudic Judaism eliminated some of the most vital and fruitful elements of prophetic Mosaism.

As the two Jewish interpreters of Christianity to the synagogue in our time have set the example in a spirit of marvelous superiority to inherited predilection, so we may seek sympathetically to interpret Judaism. Much is to be learned from Montefiore, especially in the dissipation of the cloud of misrepresentation of

the scribe and Pharisee derived from exclusive dependence on New Testament polemic and apologetic. But we shall do well to make allowance also for the excluded elements of pre-talmudic Judaism.

In his noble chapter on "The Views of Jesus" Montefiore states it as only "possible" that "with the conception of the Messiah, as the prophets and tradition had framed it, there mingled in his [Jesus'] mind and heart that other prophetic conception of the Servant of the Lord, who was only to pass through humiliation and lowliness and sacrifice to his throne and his glory." Perhaps it is not strange that this messianic ideal is admitted only as a possibility by Montefiore. For it scarcely appears in synoptic literature. It belongs to the epistolary literature, the gospel preached about Jesus. But the fact that he is welcomed as the fulfiller of this ideal of Israel as the Lord's Servant to enlighten and justify the Gentiles, his Witness both missionary and martyr, confirms the evidence from other sources that this calling of Israel was then far more vividly alive than in the synagogue of later times. Indeed, it is when we read some thoroughly historical exposition of Judaism from the inside, such as Schechters' *Studies in Judaism*, or his *Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*, that we begin to realize how large the element is, even in rabbinic Judaism, of which Christian theology might say: This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh.

Nowhere do we come so close to the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount as in the rabbinic distinction of works of "loving kindness" (*chasiduth*) from ordinary "righteousness."¹ Nowhere do we so get at the principle of solidarity which underlies Jesus' self-consecration in his martyr death "for the forgiveness of sins" as in the doctrine of *zachuth* or "justification through intercession."² It is natural that the abuse of the principle should be rigidly guarded against by the rabbis, especially after the defection of those who looked for the forgiveness of sins through the *zachuth* of Jesus' blood and intercession. But one cannot read the New Testament in the light of this standard interpretation of rabbinic theology, and not realize that the contention is true which Christian Hebraists such as Dalman and Oesterley have urged against less broad-minded advocates of rabbinic teaching, that the suffering of the

¹ See chap. xiii in his *Aspects*, on "The Law of Holiness and the Law of Goodness."

² *Ibid.*, chap. xii, on "Imputed Righteousness and Imputed Sin."

martyr-witness of Isa., chap. 53, who poured out his life as an offering for sin and made intercession for transgressors, was not a conception alien to the Judaism of Jesus' time.

Of course it is to be understood that the Servant is Israel, that the author of the Isaian Songs so intends it, and was so understood. The application to Jesus is simply on the universal principle that the Messiah has the titles of Israel: "Beloved," "Just One," "Elect," "Only-begotten," etc., by virtue of his representative function, inasmuch as he leads Israel to the fulfilment of its mission. But when we are led out into the larger apprehension of what Israel was, comprehensively considered, in the Greek period and under the guidance of a competent *Religionsgeschichtlicher* trace the development of the Deutero-Isaian ideal in the Wisdom literature and in Christianity, it will become apparent that not everything that comes down from the Judaism of post-exilic times is adequately presented in the teaching of the synagogue.

To interpret Christianity in its essence is to interpret the doctrine of the Cross and Resurrection. Judaism holds the key to this interpretation also. But not the Judaism which fiercely reacted against it as undermining the righteousness of the Law—or at least not this Judaism alone. It is that larger Judaism into which we enter when following back the many divergent streams we meet it in its first contacts and combinations with Greek religion and philosophy which must furnish it. If there be any parallel in Jewish literature which beyond others may seem to interpret this central thought of the gospel, it is in that Alexandrian sermon or panegyric of the Maccabean martyrs which goes under the name of Fourth Maccabees, and whose nearest analogue in the New Testament is the Epistle to the Hebrews. Here we find the martyrs doing as Jesus does at the farewell supper with his disciples. They pray *that their blood may atone* for their people, and the preacher conceives them as *interceding in the presence of God* for Israel.

Judaism in the larger aspect, as the history of religion is unfolding it to us, can do more than furnish instructive parallels to the ethics of Jesus. It can reveal to us the starting-point of that more vital element of the gospel; that Jesus "was delivered up for our transgressions, and was raised for our justification."